SASKATCHEWAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

BE CODE SMART

The best way to protect yourself from discrimination and from complaints is to know and respect *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*.

Human Rights for Everyone

"...every person is free and equal in dignity and rights..."

(Section 3, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*)

You have the right to dignity and equality under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. Because human rights are so important, the *Code* takes precedence over other provincial laws.

The agency that enforces the *Code* is the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. Its job is to protect and promote human rights, and to discourage discrimination against everyone living in Saskatchewan.

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination is unfair action taken against others because they belong to a certain group. It denies people benefits and opportunities that are necessary for a decent life, like jobs or housing. Discrimination can flow from prejudice, negative stereotypes, or a failure to consider the needs of others.

Sometimes discrimination is deliberate and **direct**. For instance, discrimination can take the form of racist insults, sexual harassment, or the refusal to hire people because of their age or religion.

Discrimination can also be **indirect** or unintentional. One example is a public service or office that can only be reached by a flight of stairs. People who use walkers or wheelchairs will be unable to use the service, even though no one intends to exclude them.

How am I Protected?

It's against the law for someone to discriminate against you because of

- disability (mental and physical)
- age (18 or more)
- religion or religious creed
- family status (parent-child relationship)
- marital status
- sex (including pregnancy)
- sexual orientation
- ancestry, colour, race or perceived race
- nationality
- place of origin
- receipt of public assistance.

These are known as the "prohibited grounds" of discrimination. The *Code* also protects your fundamental rights to freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, and freedom of association, within legal limits.

Where am I Protected?

It's against the law for someone to discriminate against you in:

- employment or occupations
- education
- housing
- publications
- public services (restaurants, stores, hotels, government services, etc.)
- contracts or purchase of property
- professional associations or trade unions.

Accommodating People's Needs

Employers, service providers and others have a duty to make reasonable efforts to assist people who could otherwise be denied opportunities because of gender, disability, religion, or other illegal grounds of discrimination. This is called the "duty to accommodate."

Accommodation is required unless it would cause an undue hardship. For example, employers may have to adjust working conditions or provide technical aids so people with disabilities can participate in the workplace.

The Complaint Process

If you think someone has discriminated against you, you may make a complaint to the Commission. Our fact sheet entitled "How to File a Complaint" describes the complaint process. Please note that you must make a complaint within two years of becoming aware of the discrimination.

The complete text of the *Code* can download *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code and Regulations* from our web site.

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PROMOTING *Dignity* and *Equality* FOR ALL

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